

My name is Lisa Bible. I am a community pharmacist and I am writing in support of HB 505 to the Insurance Committee in the House. I have been a pharmacist for 9 years, working in independent pharmacies for the last 4 years. As a pharmacist, I never imagined I would find myself without a job. But I have lost my job not once, but twice, when my stores closed due to PBM abuse. Not only did this uproot my young family, but it left entire communities without a pharmacy, without readily accessible healthcare providers they can trust. I have always worked in low income communities, where oftentimes patients have low health literacy and have difficulties navigating the healthcare system. When a pharmacy suddenly closes, this leaves patients stranded, oftentimes not knowing where their prescriptions were sent or how to access their medication when they need it. This undoubtedly leads to worse health outcomes for the patient. I know this first hand when my independent pharmacy, Kratzer's Hometown Pharmacy in Lynchburg closed in February 2023 and I ran into my former patients at the grocery store weeks and even months later. They were still reeling in confusion in how to obtain their medications and navigate a new pharmacy system. This is a failure of the healthcare system, and a direct symptom of the abusive PBM practices that has driven independent pharmacies into closure.

I am currently the pharmacy manager at a Barr's Pharmacy in Sabina, Ohio, a village of approximately 2,500 people. We offer enhanced services such as medication delivery, adherence packaging, medication synchronization and in depth medication therapy management and counseling. I know my patients personally and work closely with our local physician in town to optimize their treatment regimen. However, due to reimbursement issues, mostly being underpaid for the cost of the drugs we purchase, and predatory clawbacks from insurance companies, our owner and staff have had many difficult conversations regarding how to stay afloat in these desperate times. We are having to analyze each prescription we fill to decide if we can take the loss and provide the care we know the patient deserves. Brand name medications, which are commonly used for diabetes, heart disease and mental health conditions have been the most difficult for us to procure and be reimbursed at a fair cost. For example, the owner of my pharmacy, who owns a total of 4 independent pharmacies, spent about \$200,000 each month in 2023 on the drug class GLP-1s, commonly used to treat diabetes (Monjauro, Trulicity, Ozempic for example) just to lose \$12,000. In what business model is it accessible to take a 6% loss just off the bat, not even factoring in overhead and other financial costs. So we made the difficult decision to stop carrying this class of medications, which has impacted the patients in our community. The nearest pharmacy to my store is 15 minutes away, and when

patients have transportation difficulties and lack access to resources, we know this will lead to less than optimal care. Now, we have started to look at each patient with a dollar sign (whether positive or negative), instead of an individual with health conditions they need help treating and managing. But our goal is to be here to continue to serve patients, so we make the difficult decisions, while advocating for change.

I urge you to support House Bill 505, which would provide a route for PBM reform. PBM reform would lower healthcare costs across the board. Change needs to happen. The healthcare system is on the brink of collapse and you have the opportunity to help make a difference in Ohio by enacting PBM reform. This would allow for transparency and accountability of the PBM companies and fair reimbursement. This would allow independent pharmacies to stay in business. To allow us to continue to take care of the most vulnerable in our communities, who often fall through the gaps in a fast paced retail environment. If you have questions, feel free to reach out to your local independent pharmacy, we would be happy to share how abusive PBM practices have impacted the way we practice pharmacy. Thank you for your time.

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